

In the Claims

Claims pending in the application are as follows:

- 1 1.-24. (canceled)
- 1 25. (previously presented) A method of etching a layer from a surface of a wafer comprising the steps of:
 - 3 providing an etchant fluid;
 - 4 providing at least one fluid immiscible with the etchant fluid having a different density than the etchant fluid and forming a fluid interface therebetween;
 - 5 positioning a wafer in the etchant fluid to facilitate etching of a layer on the wafer; and
 - 7 terminating etching of the wafer when the wafer is passed through the fluid interface
 - 8 into the at least one fluid immiscible with the etchant fluid.
- 1 26. (previously presented) The method of claim 25 wherein the step of providing at least one fluid immiscible with the etchant fluid comprises providing two fluids immiscible with the etchant fluid, both fluids having a lower density than the etchant fluid and immiscible with each other such that a first fluid interface exists between the two fluids and the etchant fluid and a second fluid interface exists between the two fluids.

1 27. (previously presented) The method of claim 26 wherein the step of terminating
2 etching of the surface layer comprises passing the wafer through the first fluid interface
3 into one of the two fluids.

1 28. (previously presented) The method of claim 26 wherein the step of terminating
2 etching of the surface layer comprises drawing the wafer through the first fluid interface to
3 provide a rapid etch stop and further including the step of passing the wafer through the
4 second fluid interface such that a protective coating is formed on a surface of the wafer.

1 29. (canceled)

1 30. (canceled)